

## An Induction Program Impact Plan

Beginning teachers who receive regular support in their first years of teaching from a carefully selected, well-trained mentor often attribute their perseverance and increased efficacy to that support. Mentors and principals echo those testimonials and attest to the importance of a strong induction experience that is focused on the novice teacher's practice and student learning.

But aside from the enthusiastic words of those who are directly involved, how can we demonstrate the impact of these programs and the rather sizable investments they represent? And how can a deeper understanding of an induction effort's help make a program even better?

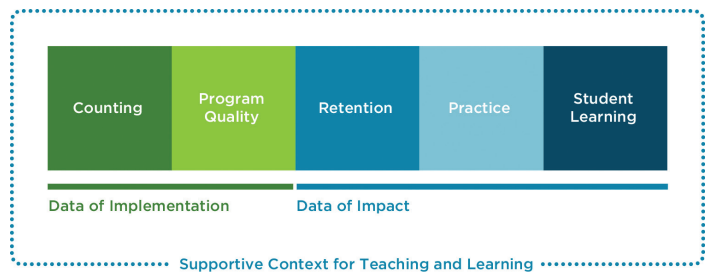
Measuring impact is essential to:

- **Improve program quality and effectiveness to better serve students, teachers, and schools.** A successful induction program constantly self-assesses to discover what is effective and what needs improvement. Many school districts are constantly in flux, and changing demographics, mandates, and leadership can influence a program's mission and goals. Schools with high numbers of new teachers have different needs from those with less turnover and a more experienced teaching force. Flourishing induction programs are able to adapt to change.
- **Tell the story to illustrate the program's value to decision-makers and funders.** When induction leaders, mentors, and administrators can explain clearly why each aspect of the program is important, there is better buy-in from stakeholders. A compelling story that includes evidence of impact is likely to capture the attention of those who make fiscal as well as policy decisions.
- **Make evidence-based decisions.** Thoughtful decisions about how to assign resources are based on evidence. In tight budgetary times, many programs are pared down or eliminated altogether. Evidence of impact can be the deciding factor as to whether or not a program component or the entire program is allocated resources.

New Teacher Center (NTC) continues to examine how induction programs can most accurately measure and articulate their impact and has begun to define the specific steps involved in creating such a plan. This practice brief offers information and examples to help programs structure an effective impact plan.

### The NTC Impact Spectrum

The impact spectrum provides a conceptual frame to use when considering which data to collect.



Because each type of data has explicit characteristics and purpose, it is important to understand the difference and value of data of implementation and data of impact.

**Implementation Data** measure different aspects of a program such as:

- **The teachers being served, as well as the school contexts:**
  - Their areas of expertise and credentials
  - School placement
  - Educational background
  - Demographics—of the new teachers, mentors, and students
  - Numbers of participating teachers
  - Mentor case load
- **Program fidelity**—The degree to which the different program components are upheld
  - Role of the mentor
  - Principal engagement
  - Sanctioned time for mentor and teacher interaction
  - Mentor and beginning teacher professional development
  - Use of formative assessment

- **Program quality:**
  - Beginning teachers' perception of the value of mentoring
  - Mentors and beginning teachers' satisfaction with the quality of professional development offered them
  - Types of mentor-beginning teacher interaction

These data can provide valuable information about the induction program to assist induction program leaders and other decision-makers in making changes and offering meaningful and appropriate professional development. If, for example, the data show many mentors and teachers are not looking at student work, that may indicate the need for more training. Implementation data can be useful for making decisions about hiring, professional development, and resource allocation.

**Impact Data** measure the effect an induction program has on students, beginning teachers, mentors, principals, and the district

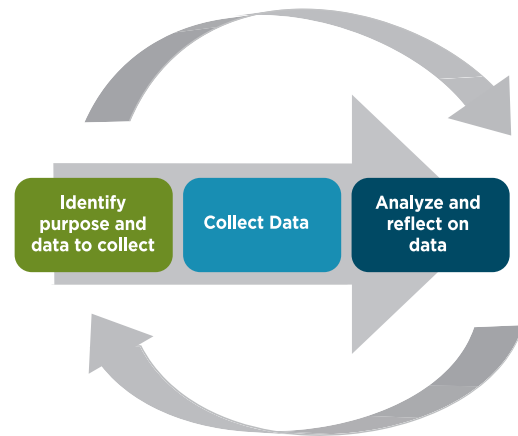
- **Are students**
  - Showing increasing achievement?
  - More engaged?
- **Are beginning teachers**
  - Better assessing their students' needs?
  - Developing and teaching differentiated lessons that meet student needs?
  - Taking on leadership roles?
  - Setting meaningful professional goals?
  - Remaining in the school or district longer?
- **Are mentors**
  - Becoming better able to tailor their support to a beginning teacher's needs?
  - Learning and applying mentor concepts and strategies that support beginning teachers and their students?
  - Assuming more leadership roles?
- **Are principals**
  - Providing better working conditions for beginning teachers?
  - Using formative assessment to support beginning teacher growth?
  - Better understanding the value of induction?
- **Are schools**
  - Becoming places where mentoring and collaboration are the norms?
  - Providing increasing support for beginning teachers?
- **Does the district**
  - Have a sustained induction program?
  - Provide necessary resources?
  - Is induction an integral part of a district's big picture?

Impact data can provide all stakeholders a picture of the effects of induction. It can also provide important information about whether the program is making a significant difference in teaching, school culture, and district commitment. Most important, it can show whether students are achieving more because of mentoring and induction.

## Structure an Impact Plan

There are three main steps to creating an impact plan:

### COMPONENTS OF AN IMPACT PLAN



#### Step One: Identify your purpose and the data to collect.

What is your rationale for collecting data? One way to clarify your purpose is to refer to the NTC Impact Spectrum. Another is to talk with your stakeholders about what they want to know about your program's value. Are you aiming to assess the effectiveness of mentor professional development or some other aspect of the program? Assessing your program's areas of success and challenges using induction program standards can pinpoint areas for data collection. Narrowing the purpose of your plan and data collection can save time and energy.

#### Step Two: Create a data-collection plan.

Explore existing data. Can data that is already collected be used as baseline data? If not, how can baseline data be collected? What sort of data make sense? Set a timeline for data collection, analysis and reflection, and setting next steps. Assign specific responsibilities. Decide on data collection methods. Will a survey be needed? Focus groups? Observations? Interviews? Transparency and consistency are important. Make sure that everyone involved understands the purpose for data collection and analysis. This is critical in order to build trust and ensure cooperation. Look for resources, within the district or a university, that can assist in data collection.

### Step Three: Analyze and reflect upon the data.

Create structures to review, synthesize, and analyze the data. Sanction time and include appropriate stakeholders (mentors, leads, beginning teachers) for productive discussions. Examine the possible reasons for findings, the degree of reliability, further data to collect, and set next steps. Create a comprehensive report. Make all aspects of the plan and findings transparent. Send short memos highlighting major insights to key stakeholders—funders, superintendents, principals, as well as the mentors and beginning teachers.

### Considerations

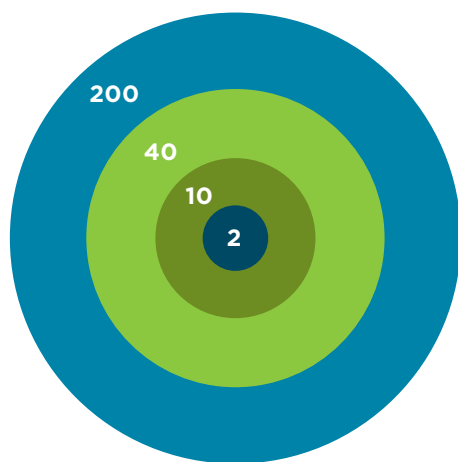
As you create your impact plan, consider:

- **What is doable?** Think about it as a multi-step process remembering that less is more. If you take on too much, it can become overwhelming.
- **Use multiple measures.** Multiple data sources and different data collection methods (quantitative and qualitative) provide a variety of lenses through which to analyze your program.
- **Engage all key stakeholders to build ownership.** Sharing and including appropriate stakeholders in the creation of your plan helps make everyone accountable.
- **Tell a compelling story.** Case studies or vignettes are powerful ways to illustrate impact.
- **Use a “target board” approach to maximize resources.** (See graphic below) Collecting data for each category on

#### TARGET BOARD

##### Potential data sources:

- Beginning Teachers
- Mentors
- Alumni
- School and District Administrators
- Program Leaders
- Other?



##### Collection Methods and Suggested Data Sample Size

- 200—Surveys
- 40—Classroom Observations/Portfolio Review
- 10—Interviews/Focus Groups
- 2—Case Studies

the impact spectrum is overwhelming. Rather, select a few key pieces of quantitative and qualitative data based on your purpose. For example, if you are interested in discovering the impact of the program on teacher retention, you might use district retention data, a survey, and a focus group. Together, they offer a more comprehensive picture.

- **Explore cost-effective ways to collect and analyze data.** Online surveys and mentor logs provide data. Remember that although open-ended survey questions, interviews, and focus groups gather valuable data, analysis of these are more time intensive.
- **Decide on the big picture research questions you want to explore.** Are there other data sources that will most effectively help answer these questions?

NTC has made the commitment to demonstrate the impact and value of teacher induction. It will take all of us carefully examining the elements of our programs, documenting successes and challenges, working to continuously improve, and articulating the impact we are making, to build supportive and sustained cultures for our teachers and their students.

### Inquiry Questions

1. Who wants or needs to know about the impact of your program?
2. How do you currently assess the impact of your program?
3. To what data do you already have access? Are they implementation or impact data? To what degree will they serve your purpose?
4. Which areas of your program are most important for you to assess?
5. What baseline data will you need to collect?
6. How might impact data support decision-making?
7. How might impact data help make the case for your program?

### Resources

Haslam, Bruce M. *Maryland Teacher Professional Development Evaluation Guide*. October 2008. <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/DF957230-EC07-4FEE-B904-7FEB176BD978/18593/MarylandTeacherProfessionalDevelopmentEvaluationGu.pdf>.

Learning Point Associates, *Guide to Using Data in School Improvement Efforts*. 2004. <http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/datause/guidebook.pdf>.

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*New Teacher Center Induction Survey*: [http://www.newteachercenter.org/induction\\_survey.php](http://www.newteachercenter.org/induction_survey.php).

New Teacher Center. *Reflections*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2010. <http://www.newteachercenter.org/newsletters/ReflectionsW10.pdf>.

*New Teacher Center Induction Program Standards*. June 2011: [http://www.newteachercenter.org/induction\\_survey.php](http://www.newteachercenter.org/induction_survey.php).

## The Hawai'i New Teacher Program: Our Journey To Measure Impact

The Hawai'i New Teacher Program is an intensive NTC-based induction program in the Farrington Kaiser Kalani (FKK) Complex Area in Honolulu. In partnership with NTC since 2005, the program serves over 100 new teachers each year, aiming to improve new teachers' instructional effectiveness and student achievement, reduce the number of non-highly qualified teachers, and increase retention. The induction program leadership team and mentors use the *NTC Induction Program Continuum* for ongoing program assessment. Over time, it has become increasingly evident that the program is making a difference. Yet, an effective plan was needed to capture and analyze impact data to ensure continuous growth and accountability.

The FKK team has been a part of the NTC National Teacher Induction Network (NTIN) for several years. This network brings together induction teams from across the nation to share successes and challenges. Participating leadership teams deepen their connection to the learning community and return home energized and recommitted.

Since the beginning, NTC has supported teams in gathering and analyzing data. In 2009 and 2010, our team received competitive grants awarded by NTC with support from MetLife Foundation that enabled us to focus on measuring the impact of mentor quality, teacher effectiveness, and student learning.

The first grant from NTC helped us to analyze our Teacher Efficacy Survey with the guidance of an external researcher. As a result of this analysis, we determined the survey was not effectively collecting the data we needed. The external researcher, experienced in collecting classroom data, led our team in developing our own classroom observation tool to gather data of new teachers' abilities to maximize learning from bell-to-bell.

In November 2010, the network convened in Georgia with a deeper focus on measuring impact. The agenda included specific information, tools, and time to apply new learning. The NTC Impact Plan Template guided us in creating a more comprehensive system to measure our program's effect. We took a closer look at how we were collecting data, identified missing components, and proceeded to refine our data collection practice.

Soon after, a second grant was awarded to FKK by NTC in January 2011. Two members of the NTC impact team came to Hawai'i to consult with us. This focused support has helped us fine-tune our impact plan. The grant also enabled us to complete the development of our classroom observation tool. We were able to train ten classroom observers, test for inter-rater reliability using the observation tool, and pilot the tool with ten new teachers. In addition, we developed a new online survey to collect impact data from principals, mentors, and new teachers. We continue to work with the external researcher to support our analysis and reporting of this program data.

We are confident that the data we collect as a result of our impact plan will guide us in making wiser decisions and improving support to new teachers. Most importantly, we will continue to create classrooms where all students learn and flourish. At the next NTIN, we look forward to sharing our most current impact data collection and analysis methods and findings. Although we see this as a journey of ongoing learning, we have undeniably grown in measuring the impact of our induction program.

—Keri Shimomoto & Sherri Sai, Hawai'i New Teacher Program Induction Program Coordinators, May 3, 2011

## About New Teacher Center

New Teacher Center focuses on improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of new teachers. NTC partners with states, school districts, and policymakers to implement programs that create sustainable, high-quality mentoring and professional development; build leadership capacity; work to enhance teaching conditions; improve retention; and transform schools into vibrant learning communities where all students succeed.



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